

11.
SIMON and MARY.

BEING THE
SUBSTANCE
OF A
SERMON

Preached in EXETER,

In the YEAR 1744.

By JOHN CENNICK.

He saith, I will have mercy upon whom I will have mercy; and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion, Rom. ix. 15. I will have mercy and not sacrifice, Matt. xii. 7. His mercy endureth for ever, Psalm cvi. 1.

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THE
SERMON
OF

Preached in the



I will have mercy upon whom I will
have mercy; and I will have compassion
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THE

LONDON

Printed by J. G. TRAVIS, at the
British Museum, 1753.

SIMON and MARY.

LUKE vii. 48.

Jesus said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven.

A Certain Pharisee, named Simon, had invited our Saviour to dine with him, and according to his custom he went; for though our Saviour did not approve of the false righteousness of that sect, but was always displeased at the manner of their expounding the law, whereby they made it possible for a man to keep it, so as to escape the curses of it, and merit heaven by his works, and so stand blameless before God; whereas they were thereby only outwardly clear like a whited wall, or painted sepulchre, and needed the blood of Christ and his righteousness to make them all-glorious within, and to be without spot before God, and without which no one is freed from the curse of the law, or is indeed righteous or holy in God's sight; yet I say, though in this weighty matter the pharisees stopped so short, and were ignorant of the righteousness of God by faith, and despised others who had none of their self-righteousness, when any of these asked our Saviour to come into their houses

he went, and shewed how willing he was good and bad should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth. "He sends the rain upon the just and unjust, and causes his sun to rise upon the evil and upon the good," and would have both be happy. He would have the self-righteous and high-minded be humbled, and leave all their self wrought stuff, and obtain of him raiment that they might be cloathed and have on the true robe of salvation, the wedding-garment, because he knew well, however specious and fine all others might appear in men's eyes, it could not stand the fiery trial which must try every man's work; and on the other hand, he would have the careless and the disobedient reformed, and leave all their sins and follies, and come and wash in his blood, and put on his righteousness, and so escape the judgment of the great day. This mind of our Saviour's is every where visible in the holy scriptures, and with this view he sometimes entered public sinners' houses, such as Zaccheus's house at Jericho, and was a guest with a man that was a sinner: Another time he sits down with the publican Levi; and now he goes to be a guest with one of the strictest sect of the Jewish religion. Indeed the last is more to be admired than the former. Poor sinners wanted a Saviour; and therefore, when they heard him preach, and offer his grace so freely, no wonder they prayed him to come into their hearts and houses: They wanted just such a Saviour, and he came on purpose from heaven to seek and save such lost sheep. But that the pharisees could invite him to their houses was a real wonder; they despised his free grace and righteousness, and thought they were well enough already: They thought, we are rich, and have need of nothing; but happily some
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of these are drawn to Jesus, and, like St. Paul, see, that all their goodness is like the morning dew, and even dung and dross, and will so esteem it, that they may win Christ and his righteousness.

It seems as if the Holy Jesus had loved Simon, and had ordered the whole matter so, that he might see an instance of his free love, and hear the gospel, and be awakened to feel his real need of a better righteousness than his own, and therefore would that day come into his house.

While he was sitting at table with him, a poor woman, called Mary, a notorious sinner, who, it is like, had heard him preach, followed him in; and when she was got behind him, she fell down weeping upon his feet, and kissing them, and anointed them with ointment, and in this posture she continued till our Saviour mercifully said to her, "Thy sins are forgiven."

The manner in which she found pardon, and some particulars relating to this blessed act of our Lord's gracious dealing with her, is not so fully recorded by any other evangelist as by St. Luke, and is worthy of our strictest attention.

As St. Luke was not of the twelve, but wrote his gospel, as himself tells us, from what he heard of the apostles and other witnesses by Jesus Christ's miracles, which were confirmed to him by those who saw and were present when he did the things of which he writes, so it was easy for him to be less exact in the order of setting down some memorable passages; and neither is it material therein to be so particular and punctual, since the main thing aimed at through all the gospel, is the grace and mercy of God our Saviour, which must be testified to every creature under heaven, and a relation of those mighty works which he did in the days of his flesh,

flesh, that by hearing this, other sinners might be brought to him, and believe on him to the saving of their souls.

The reason of this remark is, because the other three evangelists mention this woman's coming to our Saviour and anointing him, and they too agree it was in the house of Simon the Leper in Bethany, only they make it to have happened not many days before the last passover when Jesus suffered; and St. Luke gives us an account of it in the beginning of his gospel. Some think this account of St. Luke's, and that of the other three, should be understood of two different anointings, and by two different women, the first Mary Magdalen, the second Mary the sister of Lazarus; but I rather believe all the accounts are of one and the same time and person: However, as my design is not to criticise, or scrutinize into the less material part of the divine history, but to speak of the act of grace vouchsafed to a poor guilty woman, I shall say no more on this matter, but pass on to execute my purpose.

We are told, in the 36th verse, that a pharisee had Jesus to eat with him, and he was gone into his house, and at meat when the woman came in.

Here we may observe, as I said before, that though the pharisees were a self-righteous and opinated sect of people, and who had perverted the very meaning of the law with false glosses and explanations, so that they justly fell under the severest woes pronounced by our Saviour, yet when one of these wanted him to come into his house, Jesus went. His business was with all sorts, with the self-righteous, "to bring down the high from their

their seats;" and with the sinners, to shew them salvation, "and exalt them of low degree."

A woman of the city, notorious for crimes and sins, followed him in. Some of the fathers say she had heard him preach about the lost sheep, and I suppose was so affected, that, forgetting the pharisees utter abhorrence of such people, she ventured into the house: Or if she had remembered how they would not suffer a sinner to touch them, or come near them, yet as her case was so deplorable and heavy, she might easily think, What shall I do? This good Shepherd only can help me: He can but spurn me away, or bid me depart; and who knows? May be he may have mercy upon me; I will go in after him, guilty and miserable as I am, and fall down vile as the dirt under his feet. Just so once Esther thought, when her own life, and the life of her people, was at stake: Upon pain of death none might speak with the king; and, if she did not get to him, she knew all their lives would be lost in a little time; and therefore she said, "I can but perish, and if I perish, I will perish at the king's feet:" This said, she ventured in, and obtained mercy for herself and all the Jews. And thus it was when four Samaritan lepers waited in a perishing condition without the gates of Samaria: They said one to another, "If we go into the city, the famine is there; and if we continue here, we shall die: Let us go and fall into the hands of the Assyrians, we can but die; and peradventure they may save us alive." And this venturing was the happy means of saving themselves, and all the city of Samaria, from dying with hunger; so then might Mary conclude, If I go back to the old course, I perish certainly: If I continue in this state, awakened to see my guilt
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and misery, and am not helped, I shall also perish; my sins are grievous to me, the burthen of them is intolerable: I can but be cast away, I will go and worship at his feet, perhaps the king of Israel is a merciful king, and will save my soul alive. I know there are many people whose eyes the Lord has opened, they know their fallen and lamentable estate and are afraid: Some of these, instead of seeking mercy, turn back into the world, and after they have hardened their hearts, and blinded their eyes, and made themselves like the deaf adder, which refuseth to hear the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely; they become twice dead, and have their latter end worse than the beginning. Others, like the door upon the hinges, move, but not out of the same place; they are often affected, and seem in earnest about their salvation, and anon are back in all their filthiness and sins again. But others, the wisest of all, hasten to the wounds of Jesus Christ; and are resolved, if they perish, to perish at his feet; these are they who often thus save themselves, and others that hear them: For none, however loaded with sin and oppressed, however spoiled and undone by satan, came to our Saviour and went away unhelped. Of this truth, this woman in the text was a happy witness.

It is said, "she stood at his feet behind him weeping." She could not for shame stand before him, she knew what a wretch she had been, her guilt stared her in the face, and a sense of her sad estate made her weep. At last she sinks down at his feet, and as her tears flowed upon them, she wiped them off with her hair. I suppose all Jesus said at table affected her more and more; every word, I dare say, went to the heart, and the Holy Ghost,

Ghost, who had begun the good work, doubtless, gave her to feel who Jesus was, and that "he was come to save Israel from all his sins." This sense of his grace, together with a sense of her sinful life, could melt her hard heart, and cause the tears to flow fast down; and when his feet were quite wet and washed therewith, she might think, O I am unworthy that my polluted tears should touch his sacred feet; and then she wiped them off with her hair, and kissed them, perhaps thinking in her heart, These are the dear feet of that Shepherd who has left his ninety-nine in the wilderness to come and seek and save me; these are the blessed feet which have been weary and sore with journies and travelling in search of the lost sheep me; and again she kissed them, and new floods of tears oversteamed them.

While this was doing, the pharisee, Simon, was sadly offended with our dear Saviour: He questioned if he even was a prophet? and thought, if he was, he would know who that woman is, and concluded, if he had been a good man, a righteous person, he would not suffer her to come near him. Poor man! he little thought what a Saviour the Son of God was: He did not know that he was come to save that which was lost, and to be a friend of sinners; and had he only have known the depth of his own heart, he had neither despised the woman, nor been offended with Jesus, but, in deepest shame and abasement, he had prostrated himself before him, and begged, "God be merciful to me a sinner! It is a horrid and fearful thing to suppose, because one has lived a strict life, gone to church, received the sacrament, and done much good, that therefore one is righteous. Such was the righteousness of scribes and pharisees, and against

such our Lord Jesus inveighed so earnestly, telling his disciples, "I say to you, except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of scribes and pharisees, you can in no case enter the kingdom of heaven." All the righteousness of men, all our works, our duties, our alms, and pious deeds, is but self-righteousness. It is but garnishing the tomb and beautifying the sepulchre: It is whitening the wall, and making clean the outside of the cup and platter. It is at best but the righteousness of works, the righteousness of the law, and by which "no flesh can be justified." This is what God calls, in Isaiah, filthy rags, a polluted cloth, and says, It shall not profit thee. All this and more St. Paul had, before ever he was a christian, and because he knew the disciples spoke against depending on such a sandy foundation, he thought, they spoke blasphemous words against Moses and the law, and persecuted to the utmost all of that way; but when his eyes were opened, no one was more zealous to set at nought all other righteousness but the righteousness of Jesus Christ; and this was the reason why publicans and harlots entered the kingdom before the self-righteous. The latter falsely concluded, they were good and righteous, and better than others, and so rested without Christ and his merits; but the former, when they heard the preaching, knew they had no righteousness, and came as guilty and lost souls to our Saviour and obtained mercy, and he became the Lord their Righteousness. This was indeed the case with Mary, and this was the case of Simon. He was ignorant of his fallen condition by nature, and knew he had not done the crimes she had done, and so supposed himself better, and one who had less, far less to be forgiven: This led him to despise the sinner, and to be
offended

offended with his Lord. This is the case of many in the world, they despise others as the dogs of the flock, and are themselves in as dangerous a state, and do not know it; but think like Laodiceans, as they are, "I am rich, and increased with goods, I have need of nothing, and are verily poor, and miserable, and blind, and naked."

Our Saviour knew Simon's thoughts, and watched all that passed in the weeping sinner Mary, and therefore said, "Simon, I have somewhat to say to thee;" and he said, "Master, say on." I suppose poor Mary listened eagerly to all that proceeded out of his mouth, and now more especially. Jesus said, "There was, in a certain city, a creditor which had two debtors; one owed him five hundred pence, and the other fifty." Immediately the poor woman felt the meaning; she thought, Thou Jesus art the creditor, and I and Simon are the two debtors; Simon owes him fifty, but I five hundred: And now she might justly expect to hear him say, when they had nothing to pay, he cast them into prison; but, to her eternal joy, he said, "And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave all: Which of them will love him most? And Simon answered, I suppose him to whom he forgave most: And Jesus said, Thou hast rightly judged." O how did her heart bound and leap for joy at hearing this! She wept tears of grief before, but now they were tears of joy that fell upon his feet. She saw the doctrine of free grace, and believed in unmerited mercy, and now more than ever she kissed his feet and anointed them with precious ointment; and now Jesus turned to the woman: This was what she wanted: She longed for a tender look, for a smile from that face of his, he turned: It is not said, she then rose and stood

before him; no, the hour of her deliverance was come: He turned and looked upon her, and said, Seest thou this woman, Simon? as if he had said, Behold this poor polluted harlot, this wicked and wandering child; "her sins, that are many, are forgiven her!" She must be overcome with joy and transport, for the kingdom of God was come to her; she felt redemption, and was saved. We do not hear that she had prayed a word, or used any intreaties; no, perhaps she had never prayed in her life, and did not know how to speak for shame and trouble; but her heart prayed; Jesus heard the unutterable sighs of her heart, and her tears spoke the language of her thirsty and needy soul: And here it would not be amiss to observe, that when a poor oppressed soul cannot speak, or does not know how to pray, Jesus sees the bottom of the heart, and the desires and pantings of an awakened soul are of more weight with him than ten thousand fine words, or well composed prayers, or whole burnt-offerings or sacrifices. But to return: Jesus looked upon her, and said to Simon, "When I entered into thine house thou gavest me no water for my feet, but this woman has washed my feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head. Thou gavest me no kifs, but she has not ceased to kifs my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint, but she has anointed my feet with ointment." None who stood by could have supposed that the Lord had taken any notice of the woman; but when they saw him speaking to Simon, and pursuing his discourse to those who sat at meat with him, it seemed as if he had not observed any thing she did; but see, he had duly remarked all, from first to last. His heart had yearned over her from everlasting, and all the days of her sinning his eyes

eyes watched her and longed to be gracious. He was come indeed to the world to save her among the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and to bring her back to the Shepherd and Bishop of her soul; and neither was her desires and sighs for salvation any other than the effects of his own love. His Spirit had drawn her to him, and every tear she had shed he observed and counted. He felt her real grief, and her kissing his feet he noticed, and how she wiped them and anointed them with spikenard. All this is evident and clear from his expostulation with Simon. It was all as if he had said, Simon, this woman, in the bottom of her heart, believes she is more indebted to me five hundred times than thou art: She knows her sins are many, and her faults innumerable; it is therefore the glad news of mercy is such a gospel to her, therefore she cleaves to me so close for help, therefore she is so ashamed and humbled, and now when I forgive her she loves me more. When I came into thy house, how coldly was I received? Thou gavest me no kiss to welcome me. O hadst thou known the want of a Saviour, or believed what a guest thou hast this day with thee, thou wouldest not, thou couldest not have forbore to kiss me. Thou wouldest have fallen down at my feet and wondered at that mercy of mercies, and thought the God of the whole earth comes to me! But this poor woman, whom satan and her lusts have led captive these many years, see how glad she is of a Saviour, how thankful and happy she is at my feet! How have I been welcomed by her! Since I came in, she has not ceased to kiss my feet. Thou also gavest me no water to wash my feet. The reason was, Thou hast not known that all the angels have rejoiced to wait on me: Thou hast not known
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who I, the Son of man, am, or thou wouldest have counted it the greatest honour to be my servant and wash my feet: But this woman, whom thou so despisest, knows me; my Father in heaven has taught her, and therefore she cometh to me. See how her tears are poured out on my feet, and how she wipes them with the hair of her head! How is that proud spirit of the harlot humbled in the dust! How is that head (once lifted up haughty and whorish, deckt with ornaments and finery to allure men to sin with her) abased at my feet! Those eyes, which once darted impure flame, now see how they are fountains, and ashamed to look up. Her all, her very precious ointment she bestows upon my feet, and loves me much, because much is forgiven her. Think only, Simon, if I should pardon thee with thy few sins, and her with her many, how little love or thanks I should get from thee, and how much from her: In this thou erreest, and supposest that thou hast but a little to be forgiven; whereas thou, in thy heart and in thy nature, art the same sinner; and thy hypocrisy and pride are as abominable in my eyes, as her uncleanness and lewdness have been.

“And he said to her, Thy sins are forgiven.” It is remarkable we do not hear that Simon asked this mercy, or that Jesus ever said thus to him; but it appears rather as if he continued yet offended, and reasoned with the rest if he did not blaspheme in saying, “Thy sins are forgiven.”

It seems as if Simon had heard and seen the piety of our Saviour, and respected him upon that account; perhaps he had thought, this man may do a great deal of good to the vile and common people, and others who are not of the strict sect of the pharisees; but, doubtless, he did not receive him

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as if he himself wanted his help, or to be saved by him: No, he expected rather Jesus should praise him for his strict life, and with scorn and contempt, and with threatenings, reduce to obedience. He, no doubt, was conscious of his failing in some points, but he thought it was but a little: He was like the rest of that sort, who "thanked God that he was no drunkard, extortioner, &c. nor even like the publicans;" and this made him receive our Saviour and his doctrine so coldly: Had he only been truly convinced of sin, and seen how all sins come out of the heart, and that our whole nature is corrupt and abominable, and our best works and duties are spoiled and stained with sin, he certainly had not so behaved. He would not have thought of any being greater sinners than himself; but, knowing his own wicked heart, and the secret stirring of lust and pride, he would have met our Saviour with a heart overflowing with joy, and kissed his feet, and thanked him that he would bring salvation into his house, and help and save him from all his sin.

On the other hand, the only reason why the woman received him so thankfully was, she knew her lost state, she had no false righteousness to depend on, she wanted a Saviour; and now she had found him, she worships him, kisses his feet, weeps, and is overcome with joy.

As bread to a man dying with hunger is sweet, and water to one perishing with thirst, so is a Saviour's presence and his tender mercies to a soul conscious of his sin, and who is awakened in his heart, and has for ever done attempting to clear himself, or persuade himself that he is good or righteous, but knows I am undone, and spoiled, and lost, unless God Almighty, through free mercy,
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look upon me and save me. O no tongue can express how much such long to have our Saviour turn to them and say, "Thy sins, that are many, are forgiven thee." If any among you, who hear me to-day, are in this case, if you feel your sin, and want a Saviour, draw near and fall before the Son of man: "It is a true saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners." Do not be affrighted because you cannot pray rightly, or as some can, you want a Saviour the more: Look how the woman did, and go and do likewise. Let your tears and sighs speak the language of your heart, and know the God with whom you have to do, the Lamb to whom you come, has eyes like a flame of fire. He sees your hearts, and knows better what you want than you know yourselves. You must not think he loves long prayers, or will hear because of your much speaking. He tries the heart and the reins, and listens to the softest aspirations and sighs for mercy. Open your breasts before him continually, and this you can do as well in the field, in the shop, in the house, in the bed, or with company, or alone, or sick, or in health, as if you were on your knees in the closet, or praying in the great congregation. This is to pray always. Do this then, and leave not the other undone, and you shall find what a heart Jesus has. When he had a mind to save this poor woman, for a while he seemed as if he did not see her, and behaved as if he did not regard her tears and kisses; but how happy an answer did she at last obtain: "Go in peace, thy faith has saved thee, thy sins are forgiven." Just so when Saul was awakened in his journey to Damascus, for a time he seemed to be forsaken and disregarded, and this so pained him, that he could neither eat
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or drink till God hastened away Annanias to him with the glad news of his sins being washed away. When Annanias would have pleaded with Jesus against going, because he was afraid of him, he says to him, "Make haste, for behold he prayeth;" as if he would have said, I cannot bear his sighs, and his tears, and cries; make haste, I must help him: Tell him to arise and wash away his sins, "calling upon the name of the Lord." It has been our dear Saviour's manner of acting; he hides his face and we are troubled; but he says, "For a little moment have I hid myself from thee, but with everlasting mercies will I gather thee." Be not therefore discouraged, whatever your circumstances are; however you are distressed or burthened, whatever fears or doubts trouble you, bring all to the feet of Jesus Christ, and there abide till he has said in your heart, "Thy sins are forgiven;" till, like Mary, you can weep for joy, and kiss his feet here and in eternity.

But before I conclude this discourse, I shall speak upon this doctrine of forgiveness of sin, and prove, that we receive forgiveness of our sin in this world, and that we can most surely know our sins are forgiven.

Above all things, I wonder that men who read the scripture daily, and hear it read continually, venture to affirm, we must not expect to be forgiven in this world; and if we are forgiven here, yet we cannot know it. I know well this doctrine pleases our common enemy; for this may settle some upon their lees, almost persuaded to be christians; and others never concern themselves about looking after pardon, since it cannot be found in this world; and so when they come to die (they

think) it will be time enough for them. Unbelief and pure infidelity is at the bottom of the whole, else as remission of sin is so often promised to him that believeth in the scripture, men would not dare say we cannot obtain it here in this world, but with all earnestness would seek it and find it.

St. Peter says, "Through this Man's name, whosoever believeth shall receive remission of sins," Acts x. 43. Again he says, "The promise of forgiveness of sins, and the gift of the Holy Ghost, is unto you and unto your children, and unto them that are far off, even to as many as the Lord our God shall call," Acts ii. 38, 39. The scriptures were therefore written, and the gospel preached, that we might repent and believe, and have our sins blotted out; and it is the blessedness of which David in the Psalms, and St. Paul in the epistle to the Romans, speaks of, when they say, "Blessed is that man whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered," Psalm xxxii. Rom iv. 7. Isaiah's prophecy, and that of Ezekiel's too, are filled with promises of this kind; and David certainly knew it fulfilled in himself, when he says, "Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin," Psalm xxxii. 5. And again, "Praise the Lord, O my soul, who forgiveth all thy sins, and healeth all thy infirmities," Psalm ciii. 3. The angel told Isaiah, "Thy iniquity is taken away, and thy sin is purged," Isaiah vi. 7. Hezekiah says, "The Lord, out of love to my soul, has cast all my sins behind his back," Isaiah xxxviii. 17. To Joshua it was said, "Behold, I have caused thy iniquity to pass from thee," Zech iii. 4. So to the man sick of the palsy, Jesus said, "Son, thy sins are forgiven thee," Mark ii. 5. St. Paul says, "He
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has forgiven you all trespasses," Col. ii. 13. And again, "We have redemption in his blood, even the remission of our sins," Eph. i. 7. St. John says, "I have written to you because your sins are forgiven you," 1 John ii. 12. If our Saviour ever forgave sins he does now, and to the end of the world. The Son of man has not lost the power to forgive sins upon earth. He is the sole High-priest, and absolves, and washes, and makes clean whom he will. His blood has the same effect now as formerly to cleanse us from all sins; and as I said before, pure unbelief is the cause of any one's denying so precious a doctrine. The evasion some use, who say we may be forgiven and never know it, is insufferable. Can a loaded man be eased of his burden and he not know it? Can the prisoner be released and be ignorant of it? or the leper be cleansed and he not the wiser? Then is it all fancy, and not real; but if the sick, the leper, the heavy-laden, must know when they are delivered, so must the souls know when the Lord Jesus has done away their iniquity. The heart feels his words spirit and life, and rejoiceth that he has given them the knowledge of their salvation by the remission of their sins.

It would depreciate and undervalue the work of the Holy Ghost, to suppose he can apply the blood of Christ, wash and pardon a soul, and leave it insensible of the great mercy. Nor could we thank the Lord, or praise him for his grace, if we could not certainly know our sin is pardoned, and our transgression hid. It is this that makes us love our Saviour much, because we know he has forgiven us much.

I do not doubt at all, that many souls are sensible of a divine work upon their hearts, who feel

often a joy which a stranger intermeddles not with, and who are enlightened by the Sun of righteousness, and comforted much, who nevertheless can not say, I know my sins are forgiven; but then let not such rest till they can say it; and if they are sincere, and do not want to deceive themselves, they will not rest till all the promises are fulfilled to them. They will not cease to thirst, and to beseech our Saviour, like Mary at his feet, till they have heard him say, "Go in peace, thy sins are forgiven thee;" or till they can sing, "He has loved me and washed me from my sins in his own blood."

Unbelief can really hurt us in this and all other matters of our Saviour's kingdom; and I therefore pray all who hear me, not to encourage or suffer the thought which clashes with the promises of God, or the experience of such who through faith have obtained pardon of their sins, and the righteousness of Jesus Christ. What signifies all the arguments brought against this doctrine by carnal men? Or why should we be moved when they ask, How can it be? and endeavour to prove it impossible for us now to receive so great mercy. If the scriptures are not true, and the apostles and first christians have been deceivers, or if the promises of our Saviour are no more to be depended upon, and his hand is shortened, and his ways altered, then may we hear them who oppose this truth; but if he be true, then let all who speak otherwise be liars; and as such promises are left us, let every one, with all his heart, seek to make his salvation sure, and resolve to sink before the once-pierced feet of God our Saviour with prayers and tears, till he has said to us, as he did to the woman in the text, "Thy sins are forgiven;"

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with a confidence and assurance of this, we can live happy in this present life, and depart happy to the life to come. This only can make us meet the king of terrors valiantly, and go in peace through the valley of the shadow of death, because our sins are forgiven us for his name's sake. God for Christ's sake has forgiven us. Our unrighteousness is pardoned, and our iniquities covered; we are blessed, yea we shall be blessed for ever, since God, our own God and Saviour, has been merciful to our iniquities, and our sin he will remember no more. He has cast all our sins into the deep of the sea; the blood of the Lamb has washed them away. To him be glory, and salvation, and praise, for ever and ever. Amen.

PRAYER.

P R A Y E R.

O Thou loving and merciful Saviour, who out of mere pity to the children of men, once left thy everlasting throne and glory, and was made man for the sake of dying and redeeming them out of their lost estate, be pleased still to be gracious in the same way, and abide the friend of sinners. Take me to be thy child; and behold me at thy feet like Mary begging for mercy and forgiveness, nor send me empty away for thy name's sake. I am a poor sinner who owes thee much; for I have failed and sinned in all I have done ever since I was born; I have no righteousness to plead, but as a guilty criminal before the bar, so stand I before the Judge of all the earth, whose eyes have tried and found me deserving eternal death. I have no excuse; I have been disobedient and careless; I have defiled my body and soul, and am ashamed to lift up my head. Lord! I have nothing to pay, O freely forgive me all, and I will love thee much for ever and ever. Let those sharp and bitter pains of thine ease my heart, which else will be uneasy day and night. Let thy wounds heal the most diseased soul that ever prayed to thee; and let thy bloody sweat, and those blessed streams which flowed out of thy crucified body, wash me and make me clean. Say to me, "Thy sins are forgiven thee;" and let thy Holy Spirit whom thou hast promised as the Comforter, assure my heart that all my sins are pardoned for ever, and shall no more come into thy remembrance. Forgive me that I have been so careless hitherto of thy salvation, and have so contented myself

self without God in the world; forgive my indifference about my part in thee, and my coldness to thy sufferings and merits. O! have mercy upon me, and let me go comforted and in thy peace to the grave. Be with me when my strength fails me, and lay thy everlasting arms under my head when I am departing this life; be then nearer than ever, and let my latter end be better than the beginning! O do this, my dear Saviour, my Lord God and Redeemer, that I may bless thee and love thee eternally. Amen.

E I N I S.

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